



Final sobering fact.

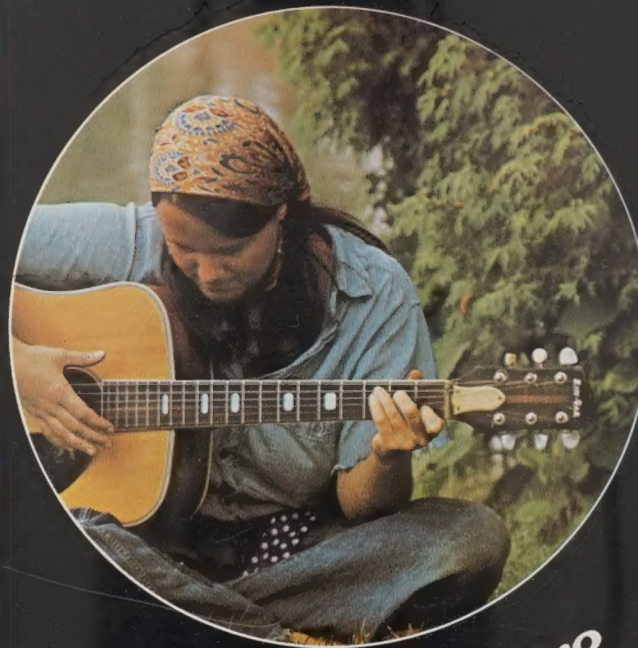
Half the driver fatalities in this country involve alcohol. That means in one out of every two highway deaths, someone, somewhere, had been drinking too much. And drinking-driving offenses among young people are increasing.

These are only a few of the facts about the increasing consumption of alcohol in Ontario. We think you should stop and think about how they can affect your life.

Look around. Notice how much effect other people have on you, and on your attitude toward alcohol. What your friends think, how they act; how your parents use alcohol; how society as a whole appears to you — all these things affect and influence you.

Some of the things you see will bother you — other things won't.

Use your judgment, and your head, to your own advantage. We think you'll find **it's worth a lot more to drink a bit less.**



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to drink a bit less.**



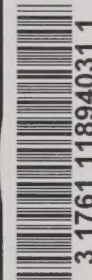
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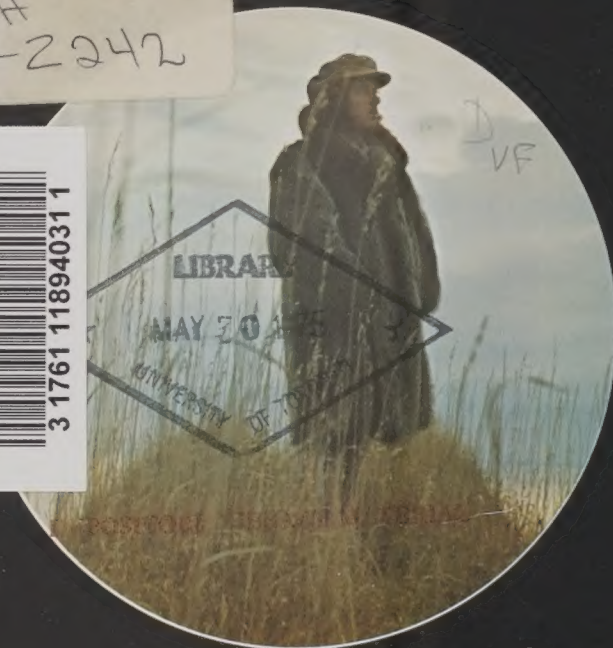
Hon. Frank S. Miller, Minister

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**Some sober facts
about drinking**



If you don't have all the answers...at least you can have some facts.

It's your life, and nobody can tell you what to do with it. If you haven't already, some day you're going to have to decide about the use of alcohol. You'll have to ask yourself a few questions. Will I or won't I? How much? With whom? When?

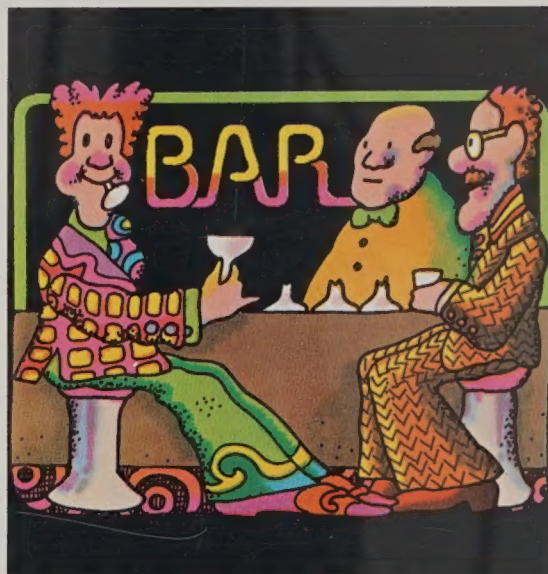
The odds are pretty good that by the time you're 18, you'll have already tried drinking—at least once. Maybe you drink regularly. Maybe you have the answers about how much alcohol is safe for you—maybe you don't have any answers at all.

We don't have all the answers, either. Because no two people are alike. But if we don't have all the answers, at least we can arm ourselves with some facts.

Here are some interesting things we know are facts:

What does alcohol do?

Alcohol is a drug. It has a direct effect on the central nervous system of the body. The old expression, "It went right to my head..." is true, because alcohol travels through the bloodstream to the brain, where it has an effect within a few minutes. A small amount of alcohol can act to lower the inhibitions, relax the muscles and ease tension. While the effect varies from person to person, generally speaking, increasing the amount of alcohol makes you feel dizzy, slurs your speech, and slows down your co-ordination. When a large amount of alcohol is consumed at one time, there is staggering, loss of balance, double vision, followed by unconsciousness.



Who can afford alcoholic beverages?

Everyone. Alcohol is less expensive, in relation to income, than it has ever been before. And the old belief that people who drink beer and wine cannot become alcoholics is wrong. Many poorer drinkers can afford only beer and wine; but both can easily provide enough alcohol to produce dependency.

It's socially acceptable.

Alcohol is legal. Anyone in Ontario over the age of 18 can buy it. And many under 18 do so illegally. It's not only legal, it's socially acceptable. The martini-drinking executive is very much accepted. And no one frowns or worries when the TV or movie hero splashes scotch over the rocks at his custom-made bar. In fact, there seems to be an air of maturity and sophistication that surrounds the enjoyment of a well-prepared social drink.

Are drinkers really that happy?

The media would have us believe so. We are shown that it's quite fashionable to drink. Commercials showing young, smiling, happy party-goers try to leave us with the image that drinking always equals a good time.

On the other hand...

In Ontario today, 300,000 people of all ages drink alcohol every day in sufficient quantity to endanger their health.

When is a problem a problem?

When alcohol becomes so much a part of daily life that it is required to have a good time...and when it becomes a necessary part of everyday living...trouble has begun.

Why are school kids drinking?

The overwhelming majority of young people who use alcohol started because their friends did. They gave in to the pressure of their group to "have a drink" because they didn't want to feel left out. Whether or not they felt good about it, or whether or not they wanted to repeat the experience—the pressure of their friends won out. Once started, it can become a rule rather than an exception to have something to drink.

Curiosity, boredom, and wanting to be part of something—many factors combine to make drinking some form of alcohol an acceptable thing to do. And of course many young people see their parents drink from time to time, with no apparent ill effect. Some young people drink to achieve the high a drink or two can bring. Many believe alcohol is safer than other drugs, perhaps because it's legal.